

News Release



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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AMTRAK MICHIGAN SERVICE IMPROVEMENTS

Speed restrictions removed with completion of Norfolk Southern track work;
Schedule changes with 110 mph Amtrak speeds effective May 21;
Federal board clears the way for state ownership of NS route

CHICAGO – Momentum is building for improved Amtrak service to and from Michigan with a series of positive developments for intercity rail passengers.

Amtrak *Wolverine Service* and *Blue Water* passengers can now expect the return to normal travel times from Kalamazoo to near Dearborn with the completion of track and crossing improvements performed by Norfolk Southern Railway (NS) to eliminate the drastic speed restrictions imposed by NS in March.

Also, Amtrak will issue schedules effective May 21 for the Pontiac-Detroit-Chicago *Wolverines* (Trains 350-355) and the Port Huron-East Lansing-Chicago *Blue Water* (Trains 364 & 365) accounting for the speed increase this year to 110 mph on the Amtrak-owned Michigan District in Michigan and Indiana. Permanent schedule changes are pending approval of NS for the Chicago to Porter, Ind., segment of the route and from CN, which owns the *Blue Water* route from Battle Creek to Port Huron and the *Wolverine* route between Pontiac and Detroit.

Passenger Service Notices about new schedules will be provided at stations, shown as part of the booking process on Amtrak.com and posted at Amtrak.com/Alerts.

Last week, the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) announced a \$3.2 million grant to further reduce passenger travel times between Chicago and Michigan over the congested Chicago to Porter route owned by NS and used by 12 daily Amtrak trains. The study will consider needed infrastructure improvements to allow faster and more frequent passenger train service along the entire Chicago to Detroit/Pontiac rail corridor.

This week, the U.S. Surface Transportation Board announced the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) can execute its plan to acquire and improve the 135-mile NS line from Kalamazoo to near Dearborn, so Amtrak can run *Wolverine Service* at speeds of up to

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110 mph in the future. MDOT received High-Speed Intercity Passenger Rail Program grants from the FRA of more than \$346 million for this purpose.

“Amtrak looks forward to working with the FRA, Michigan, Illinois and Indiana to improve this corridor and better connect these vital cities in the Midwest with travel times far better than driving, more comfortable and productive than flying and with a smaller carbon footprint than either of those modes,” said Joe Boardman, Amtrak President and CEO.

A version of this map in higher resolution is available from Amtrak or MDOT.

Service Improvements on Michigan Amtrak Lines



About Amtrak®:

Celebrating 40 years of dedicated service as America's Railroad® Amtrak is the nation's intercity passenger rail provider and its only high-speed rail operator. A record 30.2 million passengers traveled on Amtrak in FY 2011 on more than 300 daily trains – at speeds up to 150 mph (241 kph) – that connect 46 states, the District of Columbia and three Canadian Provinces. Amtrak operates trains in partnership with 15 states and four commuter rail agencies. Enjoy the journeySM at Amtrak.com or call 800-USA-RAIL for schedules, fares and more information. Join us on facebook.com/Amtrak and follow us at twitter.com/Amtrak.

About MDOT:

MDOT is responsible for a network of 10,000 miles of state trunkline roadways. This network, comprised of all I-, US-, and M-numbered routes in Michigan, carries 53 percent of all traffic and around 70 percent of all commercial traffic in the state. MDOT also is responsible for administering a comprehensive multimodal program that includes airports, intercity passenger services, rail freight, local public transit services, nonmotorized transportation and the state's Transportation Economic Development Fund. A safe, well-maintained, and efficient transportation system provides the backbone for all economic activity within the state. Join us on facebook.com/MichiganDOT and follow us at www.twitter.com/michiganDOT. On the Web at www.michigan.gov/mdot.